

8 July 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: OCB Survey of the Public Opinion Polling Field

1. Henry Loomis called me last week before departure for his "Island", and said that he understood Mallory Brown in OCB was about to launch a "Study of Survey Research". In response to my questions Loomis said he was unable to describe the proposed study but could only advise that from what he knew it would run smack into the field handled by USIA. I told Henry I would look into the question.

2. I learned that OCB (attended by Abbott Washburn) on June 6 "noted in connection with several questions raised with respect to the conduct of public opinion polls the possible desirability of an OCB review at a future date, from the standpoint of establishing agreed-upon guidance with respect to such polls". (Minutes, OCB, 6/1/55, Agenda Item 5a., second paragraph). I asked Neilson Debevoise, OCB, to see what he could find out about this question and he advised me later that Mallory Brown had been asked by E. Staats to recommend whether or not a working group should be established to suggest "guidance" to the OCB with respect to polling activity. I advised Ed Carroll, acting in Loomis's absence, to get in touch with Brown at his earliest opportunity and referred him to the OCB minutes. I had earlier advised Henry Loomis and repeated the advice to Carroll that the paper which we have requested Loomis and Crespi to prepare covering polling activity be expedited. This paper, an outline for its construction having been sent from this office to USIA some weeks ago, is to serve as an SSRG briefing paper in preparation for a meeting on polling. Loomis had earlier requested such a meeting to be held on the basis of an oral briefing. This we feel would be inadequate inasmuch as no staff work covering the interests of various offices in polling could be performed ahead of time to make the SSRG meeting more meaningful. Such a paper would now have a dual purpose perhaps of meeting OCB questions concerning polling via the OCB-SSRG member.

3. Loomis said they'd get the polling paper prepared and over to us.

PCS/DCI:WRL:PAS (11 July 1955)

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Office of the Director  
Planning and Coordination Staff

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